

## **Native American Connections Affordable Housing Community**

### **Sunrise Circle –Phoenix, AZ**



*Sunrise Circle Apartments At Night*

Native American Connections (NAC) has 36 years of experience providing an integrated and holistic continuum of culturally proficient programs and services to urban Native American and tribal communities from throughout the Southwest. Native American traditional healing, blended with research-based counseling, anchors services in health, homeless and affordable supportive housing and community development to help women, children and families improve their lives. NAC provides comprehensive behavioral health services to 1,500 individuals and families annually and owns/operates almost 300 units of affordable housing.

Native American Connections (NAC) operates three HUD funded affordable housing communities that also provide supportive housing services on site for the residents, including Sunrise Circle, a community with 35 studio and one bedroom apartments located at 39<sup>th</sup> Street and Thomas which opened in September 2003. Since then, this small, close knit community has been a safe and comfortable permanent home for over 120 Native Americans and persons with disabilities. Residents entering Sunrise Circle are homeless and dealing with disabilities such as alcohol and substance abuse. Many have limited employment skills, as well as barriers or complications due to past legal issues. However, residents are able to turn their lives around through the wrap-around services provided by Native American Connections' Outpatient Drug and Alcohol Treatment program and by on-site Housing Case Managers working to improve the resident's employment and life skills. Many residents have had children that were displaced from their home due to substance abuse, legal issues, and/or CPS involvement. These families are often reunited with the assistance of NAC's supportive services. Restored families are then able to move into a larger apartment or rent a home. Families become whole again as the adults reestablish their ties with community, culture and faith.

NAC leveraged 14 sources of financing to complete the development of Sunrise Circle. Of these sources, \$25,000 was for pre-development purposes, and the remaining sources were permanent financing of \$3.23 million. These permanent sources included \$1.0 million in HUD HOME funds through the City of Phoenix, and \$300,000 in HUD McKinney Vento Supportive Housing Program (SHP) funds. Also included with the permanent sources were four corporate and foundation sources that provided funds to furnish and equip the apartments and the on-site community clubhouse. NAC receives an ongoing annual HUD SHP program funding for Sunrise Circle of \$35,000.

## **Michele Honanie's Success Story**

Michele Honanie is one example of Native American Connections' and Sunrise Circle's success. After receiving residential treatment in early 2007 for alcohol abuse at Guiding Star Lodge, NAC's women's residential treatment center, Michele first moved into NAC's Pendleton Court transitional housing community, and then in July 2007, she moved into a single occupant room at Stepping Stone Place, another one of NAC's HUD funded supportive affordable housing properties for the homeless (funded through HUD's Supportive Housing Program and Section 8). Through NAC's housing case management program, and through a referral from the Phoenix Indian Center Workforce Program, Michele applied for and was hired for an opening at NAC's Property Management department.



***Michele Honanie***

Michele's past work experience on the reservation in property ownership documentation made her eligible for the position; her determination to succeed and outgoing personality made choosing her as an employee a good choice. In September 2007, Michele moved into a one-bedroom apartment at Sunrise Circle. A single mother, Michele's one dream was to be reunited with her daughter as a sober and caring mother. Through the Sunrise Circle housing case management program, and the opportunities that the affordable rent afforded her, Michele managed to save money, maintain her sobriety, and rebuild her life. This combination of support, services and Michele's own determination and abilities allowed her to be reunited with her daughter. Due to her dedication to her own sobriety, Michele was promoted to a housing case manager with Native American Connections, and in turn was able to give back to those who had helped her. Earlier this year, because of the various programs and opportunities offered through the supportive housing and other programs offered by Native American Connections, Michele and her daughter applied and qualified for a HUD Section 8 rent voucher, enabling them to move out of Sunrise Circle and into a house.

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